(b) if so, the details of such units to be developed during the next two years, the production capacity, fertility and selling price, as compared to chemical fertilizers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) The Government is in the process of formulating a long term fertilizer policy which will dwell, *inter alia,* on joint ventures, removal of distribution controls on urea, balanced fertilization, eco-friendly fertilizer use and promotion of bio-fertilizers.

GoM Recommendations on Closure of Fertilizer units

2393. SHRI GAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Group of Ministers has recommended closure of a large number of fertilizer units in the country;

(b) if so, what are the details of these units, the financial performance of each of them during the last three years and the number of workers employed by each of them; and

(c) whether there have been any arrears of wages and other statutory dues to the employees; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government have decided to close down Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Ltd. (HFC); Fertilizer Corporation of India Ltd. (FCI) excepting its Jodhpur Mining Organisation; and Dehradun and Saladipura units of Pyrites, Phosphates and Chemicals Ltd. (PPCL).

(b) and (c) The accumulated losses of HFC, FCI and PPCL as on 31.3.2002 were Rs. 6725.88 crore, Rs.7921.00 crore and Rs. 444.98 crore and a manpower of 4884, 5712 and 432 as on 30.9.2002, respectively. The Government has been providing budgetary support to these companies for meeting the expenditure on salary/wages including statutory dues of their employees. The employees of these companies have been offered benefits under the Voluntary Separation Scheme.